

Amendments to the Claims

1. (currently amended) A loop ~~means~~ for pointing devices for guiding a cursor on a computer screen or the like, comprising:

a flexible fabric support material in the form of a cylinder having a longitudinal axis and capable of being axially moved and circumferentially rotated around two axially oriented supports that extend parallel to the longitudinal axis for stretching a cross-section of the loop to an oval shape,

said flexible fabric support material having on an internal surface thereof a number of mutually circumferentially spaced apart, axially elongated, stiffening strips or equivalent means substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis for stiffening the loop ~~means~~ in its axial direction, said stiffening strips or equivalent means each having a circumferential width, and said stiffening strips or equivalent means having an axial length greater than the collective circumferential widths of a plurality of stiffening strips or equivalent means; ~~and~~

said flexible fabric support material having on an external surface thereof a number of mutually circumferentially spaced apart friction elements; and material on an external surface of the flexible support material, said friction material having a significantly varying thickness at different places measured outwards from the external surface of the flexible support material

said stiffening strips or equivalent means being made of a relatively low friction material for low friction sliding on a support surface, and said friction elements being made of a relatively high friction material for providing high friction engagement by a user's finger.

2. (previously presented) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 1, wherein longitudinal zones defined by and between the stiffening strips or equivalent means have friction material on the external surface of the flexible fabric support material, and the friction elements protrude away from the flexible fabric support material to a greater extent than the friction material within the longitudinal zones ~~is less than an average concentration of the friction material on the external surface of the flexible support material.~~

3. (previously presented) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 1, wherein the friction ~~elements are material is arranged substantially~~ in the form of friction strips arranged above and aligned with the stiffening strips.

4. (withdrawn/currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 2, wherein the friction ~~elements are material is arranged essentially~~ in the form of friction islands arranged above the strips.

5. (withdrawn/currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 1, wherein the flexible fabric support material is formed ~~by~~ from a substantially rectangular support material piece of cloth that has opposite edges thereof joined together at a joint to form a cylinder, and at least a portion of the joint is situated over one of the stiffening strips or equivalent means.

6. (cancelled)

7. (withdrawn/currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein ~~the support material's~~ individual threads of the flexible fabric support material are arranged at an angle of at least 20 and at most 70 degrees to the strips.

8. (withdrawn/currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claims ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein ~~the cloth~~ individual threads of the flexible fabric support material are spaced apart has a distance D ~~between the individual threads~~, where D is larger than 0.05 millimetre on the average.

9. (withdrawn/currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 8, wherein ~~the cloth~~ the flexible fabric support material is a Georgette type of fabric.

10. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 1, wherein the relatively high friction material contains ~~containing~~ small reflecting particles that are

separated sufficiently to give rise to individual light points on ~~the~~ a detector chip of an optical detector ~~such as a HDNS 2000 or the like.~~

11. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 1, wherein the stiffening strips or equivalent means includes stiffening strips.

12. (cancelled)

13. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 11, wherein the axial length of the stiffening strips is considerably greater than the circumferential width of the stiffening strips.

14. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 11, wherein longitudinal zones defined by and between the stiffening strips have friction material on the external surface of the flexible fabric support material, and the friction strips protrude away from the flexible fabric support material to a greater extent than the friction material within the longitudinal zones ~~is less than an average concentration of the friction material on the external surface of the flexible support material.~~

15. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 11, wherein the friction elements are ~~material is arranged substantially~~ in the form of friction strips aligned with the stiffening strips.

16. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 11, wherein the friction elements are ~~material is arranged essentially~~ in the form of friction islands arranged above the stiffening strips.

17. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 11, wherein the flexible fabric support material is formed by from a substantially rectangular ~~support material~~ piece of cloth that has opposite edges thereof joined together at a joint to form a cylinder, and at least a portion of the joint is situated over one of the stiffening strips.

18. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 11, wherein the flexible fabric support material ~~consists of fabric~~ is made from thin cloth.

19. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 18, wherein ~~the support material's~~ individual threads of the thin cloth are arranged at an angle of at least 20 and at most 70 degrees to the stiffening strips.

20. (currently amended) The loop ~~means~~ according to claim 1, wherein the friction elements are formed by a coating of varying thickness ~~material is coated~~ on the external surface of the flexible fabric support material.

21. (new) A pointing device for guiding a cursor on a computer screen or the like, comprising a support having rounded edges, and the loop of claim 1 trained around the rounded edges and slidably supported by the stiffening strips or equivalent means on a planar central portion of the support extending between the rounded edges.